



Remodeled, not just renovated

By Don Oliver
Special to the Drum

For those of you that stopped fishing the San Juan River because of the lousy river conditions from the Kiddie Hole upstream, you need to rethink your position. I say this from recent experience. I am one of those who said, "Never again." After watching it over the past 15 years go from a great fishery, to one of silted-in holes, shallow runs, and generally just not any fun. Well, things have changed, and you need to get yourself down there.

Thanks to the leadership Marc Wethington, who is the San Juan River Fish Biologist with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, we have a newly remodeled river. The first thing you will notice as you drive into the Texas Hole parking lot is a new catch basin at the head of the parking lot. The old sand ditch has been removed and a new catch basin to stop water, sand, and gravel, has been added. There is even a spillway on the basin to help with any major flooding.

The area from the Kiddie Hole across to the main channel, then upstream close to the upper flats, back across the river, then down stream to the Texas Hole parking lot is brand new. (So new in fact that us old curmudgeons need a river map).

The project got its start in 2004 with a management plan for in-stream habitat work. The design work was done by River Bend Engineering, with offices in Pagosa and Albuquerque. Marc did say that the people of River Bend sought input from Game



and Fish, and other individuals. Once the plan was decided on, and a cost estimate obtained, the search for state and federal funds began. However, in this case, the search was relatively easy and quick. Former New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson ear-

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marked \$250,000.00 for the Department of Game and Fish to be used for the San Juan River project, and the Feds kicked in another \$100,000.

The general contractor was Albuquerque Underground, assisted by Aquatic Consultants, also of Albuquerque. Marc also told me, these two firms brought the project in on budget and time. I guess they are fly fishermen and

wanted to get on the new river as soon as possible.

So, just what was done? Dredging was done to allow more water into areas that hold fish. Existing pools were reworked and new pools created as more water found these areas. There are now 21 pools in the remodeled area. Old islands and barriers were removed letting water flow into shallow areas that are now deep and loaded with fish. Other areas that were nothing more than silted-in-shallow-walkways between islands are now filled and shored up creating some of the new pools.

The old beaver dams were reinforced, plus two new dams that look like beaver dams were built. The new dams look so realistic that I had to ask Marc to identify the two new ones. Where new islands and peninsulas were created grass is being seeded. I was assured the seeded areas will be resistant to wind, rain, and erosion. The quality of work on this project is second to none.

Now, just because we have a wonderful new area to fly-fish, don't delude yourself into thinking the catching will be any easier. I have been down there a couple of times, and I want you to know the trout are as finicky as they have ever been. In fact, I think the trout are enjoying the clear deep pools so much they are demanding a better selection of flies. Further, slopy presentations will no longer be hidden by cloudy water and overgrown banks.

It is really nice to be able to say, "The government, along with the private sector, has done a great job." Be sure and thank those folks when you see them.

Public notice

The Southern Ute Tribe's Department of Natural Resources, is in the process of putting address signs for Southern Ute Tribal members living within the boundaries of the Reservation. The long standing and growing concern is from emergency service providers and law enforcement regarding 911 addressing issues and response time. There are precious minutes lost when emergency response units are dispatched to the wrong address. The Department of Natural Resources reminds all; these signs are the property of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. Please do not remove these sign, each sign has a purpose. For 911 emergency systems to dispatch emergency service providers to the proper physical address. If you have any questions, please contact Eddie Box, Jr., DNR Information Systems Manager at 970-563-0125 ext. 2232.



FEBRUARY COMING EVENTS

Feb 8: Club Venture Afterschool

The first of regular early release club venture activities

Feb 10: Teen Center Late Night

Dinner and a movie on our new big screen!

Feb 11: Club Venture Rock Climbing Day Trip

Practice climbing skills in preparation for Ouray. Participants get top priority registering for Ouray overnight

Feb 12: Vertical Limit: Ski & Ride

Hit the slopes with us at Purgatory

Feb 18-20: Club Venture Ouray Ice Climbing Trip

Camp out in warm yurts, ice climb, sledding, and much more

Feb 24: Family Dinner and OverDrive

Overdrive returns in February. Stay tuned



Call or email the teen center
for permission slips and
more information.

970-563-4127

970-563-9235

sucapys@gmail.com



NEW EMPLOYEES



Ian Twiss

Job title: Assistant facility operations manager

Hobbies: Fishing, hiking, powwows and killing zombies!

Family: Wife Toni

Tribe: Lakota Sioux

See SkyUteCasino.com for all gaming promotions & entertainment information!

ATTENTION:
Southern Ute Tribal Members!

Sky Ute Casino gift shop is now accepting consignment items from Southern Ute Tribal Members!

Only a limited amount of items will be accepted because of space allocation!

If interested call 970. 563.1715.



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www.skyutecasino.com

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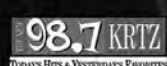
**Saturday, March 10, 2012,
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM**

**Sky Ute Casino Resort
Events Center**

Spend the day sampling various appetizers and wedding cakes, view an array of flower arrangements, find the perfect photographer, and see the new 2012 line of wedding gowns on the runway.

Enter to win prizes every hour, with one lucky couple walking away with a honeymoon package!

FREE vendor booth or general informaton, please call 970.563.1756



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